

Message Text

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FOR CIVIL COORDINATORS

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TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT:VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

FOR MARK PRATT

FOLLOWING UPI WASHINGTON POST SUNDAY AUGUST 17 STORY POR-
TRAYING SUCCESS OF VIETNAMESE IN FRENCH SOCIETY MAY BE OF
USE TO YOU:

QUOTE THE CAFE DU METRO ON THE PLACE MAUBERT IN THE LEFT
BANK LATIN QUARTER USED TO BE KNOWN AS LITTLE ALGIERS BE-
CAUSE IT WAS SWARMING WITH NORTH AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS. NOW
IT'S CALLED LITTLE SAIGON.

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MORE THAN 2,500 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAVE POURED INTO PARIS

FROM EMERGENCY CAMPS IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE JUNE. ALMOST EVERY MORNING MORE ARRIVE. BY THE END OF 1975 ABOUT 10,000 VIETNAMESE FLEEING THE FALL OF SAIGON WILL HAVE MADE FRANCE THEIR NEW HOME, IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS SAY.

MOST OF THE NEWCOMERS NEVER PLANNED TO REMAIN IN THE UNITED STATES. THEY QUICKLY RECEIVED VISAS TO ENTER FRANCE BECAUSE THEY ALREADY HAVE RELATIVES IN THE SIZEABLE VIETNAMESE COLONY IN FRANCE THAT BEGAN TO GROW WITH THE END OF THE FRENCH VIETNAM WAR IN 1954.

THE NEW IMMIGRANTS HAVE MOVED INTO THE ALREADY CROWDED QUARTERS OF THEIR RELATIVES WHO HAD SETTLED IN THE THEN INEXPENSIVE STUDENT QUARTER. THE MIGRANTS FRESH FROM SAIGON ARE EASILY SPOTTED BY THEIR LOOSE BLACK SATIN PAJAMAS, THE TRADITIONAL GARB OF VIETNAM. THE REFUGEES OF THE '60S SPORT BLUE JEANS.

INNER QUOTE MY HUSBAND WAS WITH THE MILITARY SO OF COURSE WE HAD TO LEAVE SAIGON, END INNERQUOTE SAID ONE MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN AS SHE SHOPPED IN A VIETNAMESE GROCERY STORE THAT OPENED TWO YEARS AGO.

EACH EVENING THE GROCERY STORE IS PACKED WITH REFUGEES BUYING MINT LEAVES, RICE FLOUR PANCAKES AND OTHER INGREDIENTS OF VIETNAMESE DISHES. IN THE CAFE, THE REFUGEES FILL THE BOOTHS, DRINKING BEER, SMOKING, CHATTING.

WHILE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES MET WITH SOME PROTESTS AND CONTROVERSY UPON THEIR ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES, NO OUTCRY HAS BEEN RAISED IN FRANCE YET OVER THE MUCH SMALLER INFUX OF ASIANS SEEKING JOBS AND HOUSING.

OFFICIALS OF THE HALF DOZEN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS HELPING THE REFUGEES SAID THEY WERE FITTING IN WITH NO EXTREME TRAUMA.

JEANNE RONDOT OF THE FRENCH IMMIGRATION SERVICE SAID, BEGIN INNER QUOTE CERTAINLY THESE PEOPLE CAN INTEGRATE HERE. THE VIETNAMESE ALWAYS HAVE BEEN WELCOMED IN FRANCE. THE FRENCH WHO LIVED IN VIETNAM CAME AWAY WITH A VERY UNCLASSIFIED

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FAVORABLE OPINION OF VIETNAMESE. THERE ARE MANY TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, INCLUDING LANGUAGE. END INNER QUOTE

THE VIETNAMESE WHO SETTLED IN FRANCE IN THE '60S AND EARLY '70S APPEAR TO HAVE INTEGRATED INTO FRENCH LIFE.

MANY OPENED RESTAURANTS. PARIS USED TO BE VIRTUALLY

WITHOUT ASIAN FOOD UNTIL THE VIETNAMESE INVASION. NOW THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED 1,500 VIETNAMESE-CHINESE RESTAURANTS IN PARIS ALONE, OFTEN THREE TO A BLOCK. ONE ON THE LEFT BANK IS OPERATED BY A FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF SOUTH VIETNAM, GENERAL NGUYEN KHANH.

PHAM VAN HINH, A REGIONAL GOVERNOR AND ASSISTANT TO THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF IN THE '60S, NOW IS ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN FORTUNE TELLERS IN PARIS.

FORMER ECONOMY MINISTER AU DRUONG DHANH IS A DIRECTOR OF A JAPANESE COMPANY HERE. FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION TRAN HUU THAE RUNS A GIFT SHOP. FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN QUOC DINH IS A LAW PROFESSOR.

AN EARLY REFUGEE IN THE 1920S WAS HO CHI MINH. HE WENT BACK. UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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